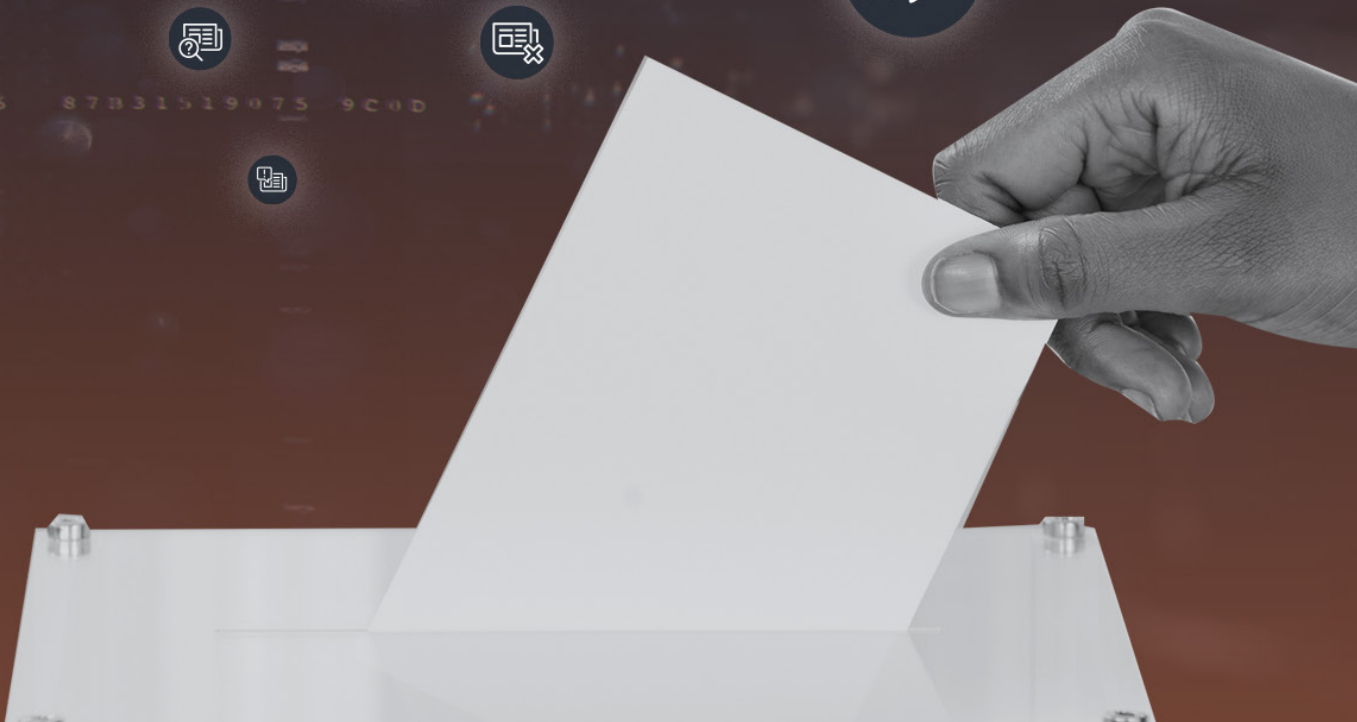




Tech for Democracy



UNDP iVerify: A MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



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Disclaimer

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* A word cloud in the form of the map of Kenya shows the most frequent word responses to the open-ended survey question of how iVerify could be improved in the future.

ACRONYMS

CDO – Chief Digital Officer

CSO – Civil Society Organization

JTF – EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance

KI – Key Informant

KII – Key Informant Interview

KUJ – Kenya Union of Journalists

KMC – Kenyan Media Council

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

MCK – Media Council of Kenya

MEF – Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MP – Media Professionals

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OGC – UNDP Oslo Governance Centre

RSF – Reporters Without Borders

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of this plan

This monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan is designed to guide UNDP and project donors through the project implementation process. The plan is to be used as an internal tool to measure the progress of the project toward its intended goals and objectives and to also inform the Project Executive Board through the Technical Committee.

1.2. Project summary

To address the ongoing challenge of information pollution online, the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance and Chief Digital Office of the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union developed the iVerify¹ solution as an adaptable and scalable set of digital tools and practices available for member states. iVerify is an automated fact-checking tool with elements of manual input and verification that can be used to identify false information to minimize and prevent its spread. In 2021, iVerify was piloted in Zambia and Honduras. In 2022, Kenya, in the run up to recent elections, became the third country to utilize iVerify. Specifically, iVerify was employed in Kenya to identify (by both AI and human users via a tipline), report, verify, label, and disseminate various kinds of information about the electoral process, election candidates, and election statements.

UNDP commissioned the evaluation study of iVerify Kenya, implemented during the 2022 General Election, as part of a larger effort to develop effective approaches to measure impact of responses to mis/disinformation and other harmful content in electoral processes. The evaluation was conducted between September and November 2022 to assess implementation of iVerify, in accordance with the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The evaluation utilized UNDP criteria, modelled after the OECD DAC criteria, to determine the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, cohesion, and sustainability of the iVerify system to understand and improve its overall contributions in Kenya and beyond. The results of the evaluation informed the design of an overall Theory of Change and of a logical framework for the iVerify solution as part of the overall M&E plan.

1 <https://www.undp.org/digital/iverify>

1.3. Theory of Change

- » IF there is a clearly identified need or gap within the information ecosystem to address disinformation, misinformation and other harmful content with the use of a digital system;
- » IF a digital technology, coupled with strengthened capacities of national actors (referred altogether as *a system*, is fit for purpose;
- » IF an independent, impartial and professional, national actor with strong systems and networks adopts the offered system;
- » IF journalists, media practitioners and content creators are sufficiently informed and enabled to use the system in their work;
- » IF there is an inclusive, sustained, collaborative response mechanism among key stakeholders in civil society, government, media, and private sector on issues of information pollution;
- » IF the public (including marginalized communities) has sufficient awareness of how to verify information and access verified information through the system,

THEN iVerify (or another system) can successfully minimize the spread and impact of false and harmful information and improve public access to trustworthy and accurate information, thus contributing to **an open public sphere and informed civic engagement**.

2. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This logical framework is based on the following principles and assumptions and is informed by iVerify lessons learned developed by the evaluation team based on the test evaluation of iVerify Kenya (see Annex I):

1. An iVerify-enabled system of information integrity is first deemed feasible and then established and implemented.
2. iVerify is a part of the larger systematic and comprehensive information integrity efforts before, during, and after elections.
3. iVerify plays an important role in implementing a comprehensive information integrity system in the country.
4. iVerify becomes an enabler for multiple fact-checking and other information integrity initiatives to work together to engage key stakeholders and voters.
5. The iVerify solution is dynamically deployed within a reasonable timeframe, fully operational and functional, and is up to date with fit for purpose digital technology.
6. Human factors of deployment are accounted for, and a deployable, agile, and responsive network of a national partner exists to ensure strengthened capacity of national actors.
7. Members of the public will contribute content to the iVerify system.

Monitoring and evaluation plan performance indicator table

PROJECT GOAL: To contribute to an open public sphere and informed civic engagement (priority 2 G4PP) by improving public access to information (SDG target 16.10) through the effective deployment of digital technology and strengthened capacities of national actors.

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure the feasibility of implementation by identifying whether minimum requirements are met to successfully implement iVerify to co-design and implement a cohesive system of information integrity of the iVerify solution.							
Activity 1.1 Research and assess existing tools, programmes, and networks for countering mis/disinformation in the country	Assessment report is produced and shared with the project team Users and beneficiaries are identified and contacted	Output	0	1 study	Assessment Report	n/a	Once
Activity 1.2 Establish a framework between the iVerify team and the UNDP project in the country, including agreement on a workplan.	The agreement on a workplan is developed	Outcome	0	1	Agreement signed		Once
Activity 1.3 Select and train partners for iVerify implementation	A suitable partner is identified	Outcome	0	1	Memorandum of Understanding	Country, organization type, Gender considerations	Once
	Partner fact-checkers are hired and trained to use iVerify	Outcome	TBD – based on pre-test survey	TBD – based on pre-test survey	Post-training surveys, self-reported confidence in using the system	Level of knowledge; fact-checker media type; if applicable: type of fact-checker; media, county, gender	Once

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
Activity 1.4 Co-create the environment for country-wide use of the iVerify solution to address misinformation challenges	<p>An election-themed coordinating group is created and functions</p> <p>A system for disseminating verified information among main beneficiaries is established</p> <p>An awareness campaign about iVerify implementation</p> <p>Number of journalists aware of/familiar with iVerify (at the start of the elections, midway and end of the elections)</p> <p>Number of journalists who understand how iVerify works (at the start of the elections, midway and end of the elections)</p>	Output	TBD upon programme start	TBD (weekly or bi-weekly meetings)	<p>Meeting notes; lists of attendees</p> <p>Meeting notes; information dissemination mechanism is in place</p> <p>Google Analytics; Data Analytics; Media Coverage of iVerify; social media analytics</p>	Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle	Monthly, from the start to the end of the election cycle
Activity 1.5 Use of iVerify by journalists and voters	Number of engaged and dedicated local fact-checkers	Output				Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle	Monthly; bi-weekly during each election cycle
Activity 1.6 Capacity building of iVerify system, with sensibility to dis/misinformation	iVerify is used in the country past the election cycle: number of users increased; number of stories debunked outside elections increased; number of topics	Outcome	0	TBD upon program start	Online survey, focus groups, notes from meetings with implementers; secondary data media content analysis	Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle	Annually

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
OBJECTIVE 2: Certify an appropriate set-up and roll-out of the iVerify solution: To develop a comprehensive system of iVerify partners to gather, monitor, and analyse informational integrity system in the context of elections.							
Activity 2.1 Create a network of CSOs, independent journalists, national, regional, and local media representatives, citizen activists	Level of engagement within the network: Number of conversations between and among CSOs, civil society, and journalists Partner-identified types of discussions regarding any threat from disinformation/misinformation in real time	Output	0	TBD in the beginning of the project	List of webinars; agendas; meeting notes; Immediate feedback from stakeholders at the meetings; observations	Disaggregated by name, affiliated organization, and topics discussed	Quarterly
	Number of journalists aware of/familiar with iVerify (at the start of the election period, midway and end of the election period) Number of journalists who identify, select, and train to utilize the system between election cycles. Number of voters who submit facts for verification into the system Number of key stakeholders mentioning iVerify in the course of their work (at the start of the elections, midway and end of the elections) Number of stories verified	Outcome Outcome	TBD by survey results before election cycle TBD by survey results before election cycle	15-30 from each region TBD in the beginning of the project	Assessment report Assessment report	Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle; if there is a large dataset, the data can also be disaggregated by age, gender, etc.	Annually Annually

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
Activity 2.2 Create, disseminate, and share verified information about an election online within the network of partners	# of media mentions of iVerify	Output	0	TBD based on initial desk	Google alerts	Disaggregated by media type, media part affiliation, if any, political stand, if any, etc.	Weekly during election cycle
	# of iVerify mentions in partner-owned communication channels	Output	0		tags	Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regional, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle	
	# of social media shares of verified stories	Output	0		Social media: Twitter, Facebook, etc	Disaggregated by platform and topic	Monthly during non-election cycle
	Presence of the network of partners in discussions; analysis of electoral discourse exists and functions; discussions around elections are strengthen in terms of information integrity # of key mis/disinformation trends spotted % of trends from disinformation debunked as evident from fact-checked publications in the media as a result of fact-checking by iVerify	Outcome				Data comparison on vs off election cycles; increased traditional and social media mentions, # of publications; reviews of media monitoring by third partners/ organizations; open citizen discussions in the country about mis and dis-information during the election cycles, tracked and reviewed	Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycle Disaggregated by media outlet and topic; iVerify (Meedan) data analytics; comparison of data on
# of verified information posted on iVerify's social media platforms	Output	0	TBD – based on initial desk review/ co-creation workshop	Social media: Twitter, Facebook, etc	Disaggregated by platform and topic	Weekly during election cycle Monthly during non-election cycle	
Activity 2.3 Communicate to a wider group of network stakeholders the presence and activities of iVerify as part of the larger information integrity efforts during election cycles	Formal presentations at key public events, forums, conferences, town hall meetings, news conferences, etc. Live and recorded webinars	Long-term, post-election cycle outcome				Disaggregated by county, type of stakeholder group; gender	At the beginning of each election cycle, adjust as necessary Bi-weekly update meetings during the election cycle Quarterly update meetings during non-election cycles

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
OBJECTIVE 3: Safeguard the integrity of the iVerify solution: To utilize machine-learning and manual aspects of iVerify to verify and publish online information-related to elections on and off the election cycle.							
Activity 3.1 Implement a strategic communication campaign to create opportunities to utilize iVerify to the full extent in combating mis/disinformation	# of iVerify media mentions during elections	Output	Based on previous year's results	TBD in the beginning of each cycle	Google alerts on iVerify mentions Google and social media analytics by #	Disaggregated by county; type of media (community vs national, regions, local; radio, TV, print; influencers); election vs non-election cycles	Bi-weekly; weekly during elections
	# and types of engagements with iVerify materials -# of stories picked up by traditional media -# of stories picked up by social media and/or influencers % of journalists and voters who are aware about iVerify and its functions	Outcome	Based on previous year's results	TBD in the beginning of each cycle	iVerify platform analytics	Community vs national radio, TV, community vs national papers' county; influencers; election vs non-election cycles	Monthly; At the start, midway and end of the elections
Activity 3.1 cont. Widespread Distribution and reach of verified stories:	-#r of journalists using iVerify to fact-check stories -# of stories and type of topics covered in the media # and types of media agenda items and conversations in social media of iVerify verified information -# of people reading/ using fact-checking stories published on the platform's website -# of people submitting facts for verification	Outcome	Based on previous year's results	TBD in the beginning of each cycle	Online survey; # of interactions on the iVerify platform Google alerts; if possible, typology of stories published Analytics from the platform Secondary data media monitoring	Gender; county; type of stakeholder Community vs national radio, TV, community vs national papers' county; influencers	Monthly At the end of the programme cycle

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
Activity 3.2 Work on the information flow and verification within iVerify to improve efficiency and minimize bias on topic selections	Number of stories verified by iVerify during election season Number of stories verified that relate to elections vs those that do not Types of narratives debunked # pieces of information fact-checked	Outcome	Based on previous year's results	TBD in the beginning of each cycle	Online survey; # of interactions on the iVerify platform Google alerts; if possible, typology of stories published Platform data analytics Secondary data media monitoring Notes of meetings with stakeholders Regular gatherings to discuss trends, tropes, and discourse narratives with an eye to spotting disinformation	county; type of stakeholder; disaggregated by region, topics, reach of stories; types of the media in which original storied appeared Community vs national radio, TV, community vs national papers' county; influencers; time	Bi-weekly At the start, midway and end of the elections
	Number of stories submitted via iVerify during election season vs off-season Number, type, and hashtags used during election vs non-election	Output	Based on previous year's results	TBD at the beginning of each cycle	Platform data analytics Online media/Social media analytics: link sharing, reach, and engagement on specific narratives	Gender; county; type of stakeholder Community vs national radio, TV, community vs national papers' county; influencers; time	Bi-weekly At the start, midway and end of the elections

Activity	Indicator	O/O	Baseline	Target	Data Source	Data Disaggregation	Frequency
Activity 3.3. Ensure functionality of iVerify	Clearly defined system of tags and hashtags for verified storied, with no repetition or overlap				Integrity and quality assurance iVerify document	Disaggregated by type; geo-location; time	At the beginning of each election cycle; adjusted as necessary
	Tags are predefined and automated to the extent possible to be used accurately to minimize bias				List of tags defined together with fact-checkers, with input from CSO and media representatives	Tracing stories with hashtag "iVerify"; and/or content analysis of stories can be performed; alternatively; sentiment analysis of the stories with hashtag	At the beginning, middle, and the end of each election cycle Monthly; bi-weekly during each election cycle
	Human fact-checking is complementary and is integrated with coder verification to provide additional assurance				Report on the process of coder verification is in place, implemented, and followed	Disaggregated by geo-location, type of user	Monthly during the election cycle
	# of conversations on social media and stories published about the functionality of iVerify				Google alerts for keywords iVerify AND functionality		
	# of visits on the platform Average time of visits on the website Average time of fact-checking to verify				Platform analytics (via Meedan) Website / social accounts (iVerify accounts)		
	# of shares per fact-checked report				Radio metrics (Global Pulse radio)		
	# of new visitors on the website # of requests on Meedan per narrative over time				Indexes (social cohesion) – Afrobarometer Election-related indicators		
Activity 3.4 Ensure sustainability and use of the system beyond the election cycle	Memorandum of understanding; good faith commitments				Understanding is reached and/or agreement is signed Comparison of data collected during election cycles vs. off-cycle		Once
	Number of stories verified by iVerify during election season vs off-season						Annually or each election period

3. ASSESSMENT

Type	Assessment produced and shared with project team
Definition	M&E evaluation report at the end of each election cycle, produced by a third-party M&E expert; allocate M&E budget into the programmatic efforts (15% recommended)
Purpose	Research and Assessment of existing tools, frameworks, and networks for countering mis/disinformation in the country
Baseline	TBD based on desk review in the beginning of each election cycle
Target	TBD at the beginning of each election cycle
Data Collection	M&E expert will conduct a desk review of all available documents, including produced reports and meeting notes. An online survey will be distributed, and data analysed at the end of each election cycle. Data gathered and assessments and recommendations will be taken into consideration in determining improvements in the governance and democracy building sectors.
Tool	Assessment Report
Frequency	Once, at the end of election cycle
Responsible	M&E expert
Reporting	The assessment report of the iVerify M&E plan will be analysed and a report will be submitted to the Project Manager each month during the election cycle. The Project Manager will then present a summary of recommendations for future engagements to the UNDP, the donors and partners. These recommendations will be used to inform further engagements regarding disinformation and fact checking in target countries.
Quality Control	UNDP will work closely with the implementer to establish the parameters of the baseline and targets; consider third-party evaluation at the end of the cycle

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities/ Deliverables
Project Manager	Provide support, advice, and direction to project staff and report to the project board deviations that may be necessary during the project implementation. Evaluate feasibility of implementation of iVerify and ensures requirements for the implementation of the framework are in place, in line with the M&E Framework Objective 1.
M&E Specialist	Carry out at least five field missions to monitor the implementation of project activities; collect data via survey and conduct and report the results of at least three Focus Group Discussions with main users (journalists, media representatives) and beneficiaries of iVerify (CSOs, fact-checking initiatives, and, if suitable, government representatives); organize and report on at least one lessons learned workshop at the national level; submit quarterly project reports to the Project Manager. Compile and submit an annual progress report. Coordinate project final evaluation in consultations with donors/partners.
Media and Communications Expert	Conduct at least five field consultative missions (can be done internally if the budget does not allow travel). Produce monthly media engagement and outreach reports, media outreach activities related to iVerify and voter use of the iVerify platform. Submit recommendations on further media engagements and capacity building related to iVerify presence in the country before, during, and after each election cycle.

The Project Manager will organize a midterm review of the project with partners and key stakeholders. This review will examine the project’s achievements to date to see if it is meeting its targets and objectives and to make any adjustments as necessary. The results of this midterm review will inform discussions with donors and partners on which areas of the project to evaluate in the final project evaluation. The evaluation focus should be on short-term, focused achievements iVerify can deliver during the election cycle and take into consideration the time and budget limitations.

Quarterly reports are a snapshot of the project impact at a point in time, each project quarterly report will include an evaluation table in line with the logframe and the information that has been gathered. The quarterly reports will feed into a mid-term, if applicable, or final evaluation report. The final report will see an extensive internal evaluation of the project using this M&E plan and will be done using project resources. Should an external evaluation be required, it will be undertaken in line with the UNDP evaluation principles and guidelines.

5. DATA MANAGEMENT

5.1. Storage

Each of the project components will maintain an Excel database to record data against set indicators. The M&E component will have a combined Excel database on each of the indicators. A back-up for stored data will be created by UNDP archives. The project will also explore the possibilities of uploading the annual progress reports and end of project evaluation (abridged versions) onto the UNDP and partner websites for easy accessibility.

5.2. Analysis

Data analysis will be done mainly through the quarterly progress reviews using tools like Excel.

5.3. Privacy

This M&E plan is for internal project use only. Monthly and quarterly reports produced in this plan will be for internal project management purposes. The annual project reports will be submitted to the project technical committees for their comments and the final report submitted to project partners. These annual reports will be shared with other key stakeholders. The project will also be able to share information on its activities and deliverables with stakeholders through summary reports.

6. ANNEX I

iVerify Lessons Learned

These lessons were developed by the evaluation team based on the pilot evaluation in Kenya.

1. There is a need for a platform like iVerify to help fact-check misinformation during the election season and off-season. iVerify should be available during the off-season because some of the most potent misinformation related to elections starts before the electioneering period. Curbing misinformation during the off-season will also likely deter peddlers of information pollution from seeing the election period as a time to double down on spreading mis/disinformation.
2. iVerify should have an implementation timeline allowing to launch the system six to nine months before the elections. Whenever possible, ensure there is a sufficient time to meet this deadline, which might not always be the case. Establishing a network of partners and coordinating with all relevant stakeholders with help of the implementing partner should begin right at the start. Such networking would ensure stakeholders have time to familiarize themselves with iVerify, learn about its verification process, and see its usefulness as a tool for citizens to verify online information in real time.
3. Concerted efforts should be made to promote iVerify among key stakeholders in the media industry such as journalists, editors, management, and members/officials of journalists' unions. Based on the results of the iVerify evaluation, this effort should start at least six months before the elections. To increase awareness and use of iVerify, a comprehensive communication plan and budget should be in place – with measures of success, informed by a viability/pre implementation assessment – as a pre-requisite before implementation.
4. Efforts should be made to train key iVerify staff, such as fact-checkers and officials who will oversee the platform, at least six months before the elections. That would ensure their expertise and full understanding of the platform and will minimize bias and increase the quality of fact-checking.
5. Proper partnership vetting and due diligence in selecting the partner should be completed before partners receiving the ownership or are involved in the implementation of iVerify. This process should be done in close consultation with the independent media, CSOs, and other donors in the country.

6. The evaluation team should keep in mind the timeline, budget, data collection capabilities, partner engagement in M&E activities, and overall awareness about the platform among stakeholders to properly evaluate the M&E plan and its execution in the future so that the M&E team can adjust accordingly.



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